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**From:** Brian Rice [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 10/31/2021 4:43:30 PM  
**To:** Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fwd: not even sure what to say at this point

**Flag:** Followup

Eric—we had heard from Rob Thursday as well regarding Thursday's wapo story (my response below). I saw the Surgeon General's reaction on Twitter—we want to make sure you and he have the context necessary as we feel strongly that the claims made in the story are not accurate, especially considering that we had discussed many of the studies referenced during our briefings.

Please let me know if you'd have time for a longer conversation next week.

Thanks,

Brian

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**From:** Brian Rice [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 11:58 AM  
**To:** Flaherty, Rob R. EOP/WHO  
**Subject:** Re: not even sure what to say at this point

Hey—nothing in the story is inconsistent with what we briefed on. The studies referenced in the story were all done early and were not in any way considered to be methodologically appropriate for sharing. We referenced these in briefings and also talked about why we were not comfortable using this type of data because it's unreliable. This has been a fundamental disagreement to be sure in terms of data you have asked for and data that we have said is best used to depict the scope of the issue. But we've been open about that. A number of these studies cited in the story were specifically referenced during our briefings. Happy to get on the phone to walk through why this story is not accurate—like much of the coverage in recent days it relies on cherry picked data that portrays a specific narrative. In the meantime, here's the statement we just released:

"The studies cited were in no way definitive, which is why we did not share them as if they were. They were early directional analyses meant to give guidance to product and policy teams on where we could improve our defenses against harmful vaccine misinformation. We improved our policies based in part on those analyses and communicated those steps to policymakers and the public. As VP of Integrity Guy Rosen noted in August, measuring prevalence of a specific type of content on our platform takes years of work - especially on a topic as dynamic as vaccine misinformation - which is why no company has to date been able to share that data."

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**From:** Flaherty, Rob R. EOP/WHO [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 10:09:04 AM  
**To:** Brian Rice [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** not even sure what to say at this point

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/10/28/facebook-covid-misinformation/>

**Rob Flaherty**

Director of Digital Strategy

The White House

